

**In the Claims:**

1. (Currently amended) A method comprising:

storing one or more messages on a mail server, wherein each message is associated with an index time;  
performing a full backup ~~by~~, wherein said performing the full backup comprises:  
storing a version of each message of the one or more messages on a backup medium; and  
storing a backup time ~~asocciated with~~ corresponding to the full backup as a value of a particular named parameter associated with the mail server;  
storing one or more additional messages on the mail server, wherein each additional message is associated with an index time; and  
performing a partial backup ~~by~~, wherein said performing the partial backup comprises:  
storing respective versions of selected messages on the backup medium dependent upon a difference between the index time associated with each message and the backup time; and  
after storing the respective versions, modifying the value of the particular named parameter to a time at which the partial backup was initiated.

2. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the ~~partial backup is performed by backing up each message that includes~~ selected messages comprise a particular additional message of the one or more additional messages, wherein the particular additional message is associated with an index time that is dated after the backup time.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein each message on the mail server is contained in a mail folder object.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein storing the backup time comprises modifying a data member of the mail folder object, wherein the data member is a defined parameter of the mail folder object.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the data member is defined by a manufacturer of the mail server.

6. (Currently amended) The method of claim 4, ~~wherein the mail server is a Microsoft Exchange server, and~~ wherein the data member is a PR\_LAST\_FULL\_BACKUP property.

7. (Currently amended) A method comprising:

performing a full backup of a mail folder object on a mail server, wherein performing a

the full backup comprises:

storing, as a value of a particular named property of the mail server, a time the full

backup begins as a backup time in of the mail folder object, and

transferring one or more messages in the mail folder object dated before the

backup time to a backup medium;

performing a partial backup of the mail folder object, wherein performing the partial

backup comprises:

storing, in a data variable, a time the partial backup begins as a partial backup

time, and;

transferring one or more messages in the mail folder object dated before the

partial backup time and dated after the backup time to the backup

medium; and

after transferring the one or more messages dated before the partial backup time,

setting the value of the particular named property to the partial backup

time stored in the data variable.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently amended) The method of claim 8 7, wherein ~~storing the backup time~~ comprises modifying the particular named property comprises a data member of the mail folder object, ~~wherein the data member is a defined parameter of the mail folder object.~~

10. (Currently amended) The method of claim 9, ~~wherein the mail server is a Microsoft Exchange server, and~~ wherein the data member is a PR\_LAST\_FULL\_BACKUP property.

11. (Currently amended) A system comprising:

- a mail server operable to store one or more messages, wherein each message is associated with an index time;

- a backup medium;

- a backup application, wherein said backup application is operable to:

- perform a full backup, wherein a to perform the full backup, the backup application is configured to store each message on said backup medium, and ~~storing store~~ a backup time ~~associated with~~ corresponding to said full backup as a value of a particular named property associated with the mail server; and

- ~~wherein said backup application is further operable to perform a partial backup, wherein a~~ to perform the partial backup, the backup application is configured to store ~~comprises storing~~ selected messages on the backup medium dependent upon a difference between the index time associated with each message and the backup time and set the value of the particular named property to a time at which the partial backup began.

12. (Currently amended) The system of claim 11, wherein the ~~backup application is operable to perform said partial backup by backing up each message that includes an~~ each of the selected messages is associated with a respective index time that is dated after the backup time.

13. (Currently amended) The system of claim 11 further comprising one or more mail folder objects, wherein each of said mail folder objects ~~is operable to contain~~ includes one or more messages.

14. (Currently amended) The system of claim 13, wherein each mail folder object comprises a data member, wherein the data member is a defined parameter of the mail folder object, wherein the particular named property comprises the data member of a particular mail folder object of the one or more mail folder objects, wherein the particular mail folder includes the messages stored on the backup medium during the full backup and the selected messages stored on the backup medium during the partial backup ~~said backup application is operable to store the backup time in said data member.~~

15. (Currently amended) The system of claim 14, wherein the data member of the particular mail folder object is defined by a manufacturer of the mail server.

16. (Currently amended) The system of claim 14, ~~wherein the mail server is a Microsoft Exchange server, and~~ wherein the data member of the particular mail folder object is a PR\_LAST\_FULL\_BACKUP property.

17. (Currently amended) A system comprising:

- a mail server operable to store one or more messages in a mail folder object;

- a backup medium;

- a backup application, ~~wherein said backup application is operable~~ configured to:

- ~~perform a full backup on the mail folder object, wherein performing a full~~

- ~~backup comprises~~ to perform the full backup, the backup

- application is further configured to:

- storing store , as a value of a particular named property associated with the mail folder object, a time the full backup begins as

- a backup time in of the mail folder object, and

- ~~transferring~~ transfer one or more messages in the mail folder object

- dated before the backup time to the backup medium; and

~~wherein said backup application is further operable to perform a partial backup of the mail folder object, wherein performing the partial backup comprises to perform the full backup, the backup application is further configured to:~~  
~~storing store, in a data variable, a time the partial backup begins as a partial backup time; and ;~~  
~~transferring transfer one or more messages in the mail folder object dated before the partial backup time and dated after the backup time to the backup medium; and~~  
~~after transferring the one or more messages dated before the partial backup time, set the value of the particular named property associated with the mail folder object to the partial backup time stored in the data variable.~~

18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently amended) A tangible, computer readable medium including program instructions, ~~wherein the instructions are computer-executable to executable to implement a method comprising:~~

~~storing store one or more messages on a mail server, wherein each message is associated with an index time;~~

~~performing perform a full backup, wherein to perform the full backup, the instructions are further executable to:~~

~~determine, for each message of the one or more messages, whether the message includes an attachment;~~

~~if the message does not include an attachment, store the message on a backup medium; and~~

~~if the message includes an attachment, store metadata associated with the attachment in an attachment index, and store a modified version of the message on the backup medium, wherein the modified version excludes the attachment; and~~

~~by storing each message on a backup medium;~~

~~storing store~~ a backup time ~~asocaiated with~~ corresponding to the  
full backup;  
~~storing store~~ one or more additional messages on the mail server, wherein each  
additional message is associated with an index time;  
~~performing perform~~ a partial backup by ~~storing~~ respective versions of selected  
messages on the backup medium dependent upon a difference between  
the index time associated with each message and the backup time.

20. (Currently amended) The computer readable medium of claim 19 wherein ~~the partial backup is performed by backing up each message that includes an~~ each of the selected messages is associated with a respective index time that is dated after the backup time.

21. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 19, wherein each message on the mail server is contained in a mail folder object.

22. (Currently amended) The computer readable medium of claim 21, wherein ~~storing to store~~ the backup time, the instructions are further computer-executable to modify  
~~comprises modifying~~ a data member of the mail folder object, wherein the data member is a defined parameter of the mail folder object.

23. (Currently amended) A tangible, computer readable medium including program instructions, wherein the instructions are computer-executable to ~~executable to implement a method comprising:~~

~~performing perform~~ a full backup of a mail folder object on a mail server, wherein  
~~performing-a to perform the~~ full backup, the instructions are further  
computer-executable to ~~comprises:~~  
~~storing store,~~ as a value of a particular named property associated with the  
mail folder object, a time the full backup begins as a backup time  
in of the mail folder object, and  
~~transferring transfer~~ one or more messages in the mail folder object dated  
before the backup time to a backup medium; and

~~performing~~ perform a partial backup of the mail folder object, wherein ~~performing~~  
to perform the partial backup, the instructions are further computer-  
executable to comprises:  
~~storing~~ store, in a data variable, a time the partial backup begins as a  
partial backup time; ~~and~~ ;  
~~transferring~~ transfer one or more messages in the mail folder object dated  
before the partial backup time and dated after the backup time to  
the backup medium; and  
after transferring the one or more messages dated before the partial  
backup time, set the value of the particular named property  
associated with the mail folder object to the partial backup time  
stored in the data variable.

24. (Canceled)

25. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein said storing a version of each message of the one or more messages on the backup medium comprises:

determining, for each message of the one or more messages, whether the message includes an attachment;  
if the message does not include an attachment, storing the message on the backup medium; and  
if the message includes an attachment,  
storing metadata associated with the attachment in an entry in an attachment index, wherein each entry in the attachment index corresponds to a respective attachment for which no other entries are included in the attachment index; and  
storing a modified version of the message on the backup medium, wherein the modified version excludes the attachment.

26. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein said performing a full backup further comprises:

for each entry in the attachment index, transferring a single copy of a  
corresponding attachment to the backup medium

27. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein said performing the partial backup further  
comprises:

selecting a particular additional message of the one or more additional messages  
to be stored on the backup medium, wherein said selecting comprises  
invoking a filtering member function supported by a mail folder object of  
the mail server.